ANNUAL CONVENTION PROGRAMS

The First Annual Convention of the AMTA, formerly the American Association of Masseurs and Masseuses, was held at the Hotel Continental in Kansas City, Missouri on August 14 - 16, 1946. the AAMM was just three years old at the time of this first national gathering.

AMTA conventions have gotten longer and larger as the years passed, but this first gathering set the pattern for conventions to come. The souvenir program, a copy of which is in the AMTA archives, lists the official happenings of the convention, a few advertisements, and a poem.

The 1946 convention opened with a call to order and the singing of "God Bless America." There was an invocation by Rev. Clark Cottrell of Aberdeen, Washington, and an address by the President, Charles T. Williams. Manufacturers' representatives were introduced next, and then the constitution and by-laws were read. After a recess, the program continued with the very first educational sessions at an AMTA national convention.

1:00 pm Lecture and Demonstration on Zone Therapy by Eunice D. Ingham.
2:30 pm Talk on Equipment by Representative of the Stanley Corporation, Mr. Harry McConnell.
3:00 pm Round Table Discussion, led by Dr. Clyde E. Walton, Kansas City, Kansas.

Harry McConnell of the Stanley Physical Therapy Equipment and Supply Company in Chicago was also the Registrar of the College of Swedish Massage in Chicago. He was present when the AAMM was organized in Chicago in 1943. In an ad in the program book, Harry wishes success to the AAMM and says he feels "like sort of a godfather to it."

On the second day of this first AMTA convention, the group opened by singing "The More We Get Together," read the minutes and reports, and had a second reading of the constitution and by-laws. Nominations for officers were taken. The educational program consisted of a lecture and demonstration on massage and multi-therapy by John Granger; talk and demonstration by representative of the Therm-Aire Corportation; and a round table discussion led by Mrs. Ermel Rothgeb from Winthrop, Washington, and Mrs. James C. Sigler from Evansville, Indiana.

The last day opened with singing of "The More We Get Together." a reading of minutes and reports, final action on constitution and by-laws, and the election of officers. Educational sessions were a lecture and demonstration on "cradepathy" by vice-president Dr. I.H. Lewis, and a round table discussion led by Mrs. Gereva Anderson of Kansas City, Kansas. This was followed by the installation of officers, and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne." A banquet was held that evening.

Besides the regular convention program, a special two-day post-graduate course in the technique of "modern massage" was offered at the convention. The course was taught by John Granger, originator of the John Granger Method of Modern Massage, founder of the Multi-Therapy College, and author of Home and Professional Treatment. It was open only for convention members at a special price. "Get your diploma before you leave."

The Masseur (official bulletin of the AAMM) of September 1946 (V 2 N 5) contained several letters from those who attended the first convention. Among those was one from the new president, Clark Cottrell, Sr. He sent his greetings to the membership:

"To the officers and members of the AAMM Greetings;

I wish to express my sincere thanks for your confidence in giving me the great honor of electing me to the Presidency of our Association.

Whatever the oath of office is, I promise to do all in my power to lead you into a great and serviceable future.

I am sure we are in the right track to the natural methods of healing. Let us keep faith in the great art of healing and in the Great Physician of all healing.

My special thanks goes to our most worthy former President, Chas T. Williams. It was he who put me on the spot...and now he will have to dance next year when we meet with Dr. Cole in Kentucky.

One more word; I am not going to be boss. My motto is 'Co-operation' 'Together we stand, divided we fall' You will hear from me again."

Sincerely yours,
Sig: Clark Cottrell, Sr.

Convention Programs in the Archives

The AMTA national archives contain a number of the annual convention programs, but many are still missing. These programs tell us much about our past officers, the topics which were of interest to massage therapists over the years, and types of equipment and supplies advertised. Lectures and demonstrations given at educational programs show how diverse the types of treatments massage therapists used actually were. In addition, the first listing of all members, the registry, was first published in the annual convention program in the early 1950's.

Annual convention programs for the following years are still missing. Please help us locate them so that our National Archives collection of convention programs will be complete.

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National Historian's Report...

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MISSING PROGRAMS

1947 Kansas City, Missouri
1950 Chicago, Illinois
1951 Kansas City, Missouri
1955 Louisville, Kentucky
1957 Pottsville, Pennsylvania
1967 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1968 Sacramento, California
1969 Miami Beach, Florida
1970 Chicago, Illinois
1972 Washington, D.C.
1973 Wichita, Kansas
1975 Orlando, Flordia
1977 Denver, Colorado
1978 San Antonio, Texas
1979 Hartford, Connecticut

Please look through your old files and desk drawers for the missing convention programs. Send any information regarding possible donations to the AMTA National Archives to:

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